

development as well. It support the international community taking greater action, including providing more security, in order to achieve this progress.

I believe this resolution should be able to garner wide support. This House should be on record as condemning the violence and saying that the human rights situation for the people who live there, regardless of their ethnicity, must improve.

RESOLUTION

Whereas the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) successfully intervened in 1999 to stop the continued, brutal repression of the Albanian population of Kosovo by the regime of Slobodan Milosevic;

Whereas NATO has subsequently led a multinational peace operation in Kosovo, known as KFOR, while the United Nations has deployed an international civilian police force to enhance peace and security;

Whereas the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has deployed a mission to help develop democratic institutions, including a professional and multi-ethnic Kosovo Police Service, and encourage respect for human rights;

Whereas the United States and the international community as a whole have called for all parties to respect the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (June 10, 1999) as the basis for progress in Kosovo;

Whereas the United Nations has developed benchmarks in Kosovo, progress in the achievement of which would include increased respect for human rights and adherence to the rule of law;

Whereas ethnic communities comprising the population of Kosovo, including an Albanian majority and Serb, Romani, and several other minority communities, have yet to reconcile their differences despite efforts by the international community and several nongovernmental organizations;

Whereas the OSCE has issued several reports critical of the respect shown in Kosovo for the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

Whereas ethnic tensions remain high in Kosovo due to the lack of freedom of movement, the inability of displaced persons to return to their homes, and sporadic and recurring attacks on individuals, their property, and particularly their places of worship;

Whereas separate and tragic incidents in Kosovo led to a massive outbreak of violence on March 17, 2004, which has left dozens dead, hundreds wounded, and thousands more displaced;

Whereas Orthodox churches and monasteries in Kosovo have often been targeted for attack, and in recent days several additional churches and monasteries have been severely damaged or destroyed;

Whereas mosques in Serbia have also been attacked, damaged, or destroyed, in apparent retaliation for the violence taking place against minority populations in Kosovo;

Whereas this violence in Kosovo threatens the dialogue which has just been established on issues of common concern, such as resolving the cases of missing persons from the earlier conflict; and

Whereas it should be beneath the dignity of any individual who was persecuted or otherwise suffered under the repressive regime of Slobodan Milosevic to violate the human rights of others, to support the persecution or repression of those belonging to other ethnic groups, or to encourage or participate in their ethnic cleansing: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the outbreak of violence in Kosovo deserves the strongest condemnation by the

United States and the international community, and all sides should refrain from encouraging or engaging in any further violence;

(2) the attacks on places of worship in Kosovo and in various Serbian cities should be viewed as especially reprehensible;

(3) those who can be identified as responsible for acts of violence should be brought to justice;

(4) the elected leaders of Kosovo have a primary responsibility to take action to stop any continuing violence, to prevent future violence, and to encourage ethnic reconciliation and respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities in Kosovo;

(5) the presence of additional military forces in the NATO-led multinational peace operation in Kosovo, known as KFOR, as decided by NATO with the support of the United States on March 18, 2004, is warranted and welcomed;

(6) the international community should take necessary measures to protect people and property facing the threat of violence in Kosovo;

(7) dialogue on issues of common concern in Kosovo, including the resolution of missing persons cases, should continue;

(8) the benchmarks established by the United Nations parallel the democratic standards established and encouraged by participating states of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);

(9) the United States and the international community as a whole should maintain an active and effective presence in Kosovo not only until violence subsides but until there is significant progress in meeting the benchmarks established by the United Nations, including the return of displaced persons and greater freedom of movement for all persons throughout Kosovo; and

(10) authorities in Serbia should maintain efforts to protect people and property vulnerable to retaliatory violence.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, March 23, I was unavoidably detained due to a prior obligation. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on the following: Rollcall vote No. 72 on Approving of the Journal; Rollcall vote No. 73 on H.R. 958, the Hydrographic Services Amendments of 2003; Rollcall vote No. 74 on H.R. 2408, the National Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Act of 2003; and Rollcall vote No. 75 on H.R. 2489, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe Distribution of Judgment Funds Act.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO HARRY TUCKER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Harry Tucker, who has been a central figure in Buford, Colorado for nearly fifty years. He fell in love with Buford while on a hunting trip in 1936, but seventeen years of service in the Air

Force delayed his plans to settle there. When he finally moved to Buford and bought the Buford store, he became a local fixture, running the store for nearly half of its over a century of existence.

Harry grew up in North Denver and earned a teaching degree from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, which he attended on a football scholarship. Following his graduation, Harry joined the Armed Forces and served his country in both World War II and Korea. Upon returning from Korea, he settled in Buford, and in 1956 he bought the historic Buford Store, and began teaching and coaching wrestling in nearby Meeker. After teaching for three years, Harry started an outfitting business, and subsequently helped found the Colorado Outfitters Association. In 1995, his son Tom took over the outfitting business, while Harry concentrated his efforts on the Buford store.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Harry Tucker before this body of Congress and this nation, and to commend him for his outstanding service and dedication to his country, his family, and his community. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

COMMEMORATING GREEK INDEPENDENCE

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic issues, I rise and join my colleagues in honoring the 183rd anniversary of Greek independence. This is an important occasion to pay special tribute to the Greek nation and its people.

More than marking the independence achieved by the Greeks in 1821, today the House of Representatives celebrates the special relationship between Greece and the United States.

We Americans owe a special debt of gratitude to the country upon which our democratic process is founded. Greece was the cradle of democracy, the birthplace of the civic engagement so inherent in our country's social fabric. Whenever we promote freedom, civil liberties, and self-determination, we pay testament to our shared values and common heritage.

This year is particularly significant as the time when the Olympics return home. The 2004 Olympic Games in Athens will showcase both the prowess of the world's best athletes and the historical and cultural significance of a world-renowned city. Now more than ever, we look forward to seeing people from all over the globe come together in the spirit of peaceful competition, pursuing personal excellence, national pride and international cooperation.

Today, in my district in Massachusetts, thousands of Greek American families will commemorate this occasion and partake in festivities that pay tribute to their heritage. I extend congratulations to them, to all the people of Greek descent in the United States, and to the people of Greece on this important holiday.